

U.S. and Philippine Forces conduct first MEDCAP in Parang

SOCAP Public Affairs

SULU, Philippines--The Philippine Armed Forces from southern command, the U.S. Armed Forces from Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines and local volunteers conducted the first ever Medical Civic Action Program (MEDCAP) and humanitarian assistance mission at the elementary school in the town of Parang on Dec. 10.

"Our goal here is to provide capacity building to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), together conduct civil military operations in conflicted areas and provide a secure environment so that development and social progress can occur," said Col. James Linder, Commander, JSOTF-P. "With our civilian agency and non-governmental organization partners, we want to plant the seeds of economic growth."

Collectively, Philippine Armed Forces medics and U.S. Armed Forces medics treated 1,550 patients, including 1,100 medical and dental admissions. Free prescription drugs were delivered as well as preventive care supplies including dental care items, vitamins and education kits. More than \$15,000 of medical and humanitarian assistance supplies was distributed to the Parang citizens.

"Throughout this country, with the cooperation of the government of the Philippines, we will continue to advise, assist and share information with our AFP counterparts and strengthen their hand in the global war on terrorism," Linder said.

Parang, a small town on Sulu Island in the Southern Philippines, has approximately 25,000 people that have only very limited access to rudimentary medical services. It is very lush and beautiful but also the poorest area on island.



U.S. Army Lt. Col. Jim McAllister, commander, Joint Special Operations Task Force (Forward) consults with his Armed Forces of the Philippines counterpart during a combined Medical Civic Action Program (MEDCAP) in Parang, Republic of the Philippines on Dec. 10. Parang is a town in the Sulu Archipelago in the Southern part country where there have been a series of MEDCAPs in remote towns that have little access to medical and dental care. More than 1,500 medical and dental patients were seen and \$15,000 worth of medical supplies was distributed.